

NERC Council Member Handbook

Introduction

This Handbook has been developed to establish a primary source of information for all UKRI Councils Council Members.

Useful links have been provided below, grouped by category.

Each Council has their own Secretariat who can be contacted with queries:

Helen Page, Council Secretary, helen.page@nerc.ukri.org

Fiona Dickenson, Council Administrator, Fiona.dickenson@nerc.ukri.org

Background and Strategy

This section covers background on UKRI and its constituent Councils.

- [UKRI Strategic Prospectus](#)
The Strategic Prospectus represents the beginning of the process to develop a detailed Research and Innovation Strategy.
- [UKRI Councils](#)
UK Research and Innovation brings together the seven Research Councils, Innovate UK and a new organisation, Research England

Governance and Structure

The [UKRI Governance and Structure site](#) outlines the organisational governance arrangements that enable clear accountability and efficient decision-making.

Key documents include:

- [UKRI Framework Document](#)
- [Higher Education and Research Act \(2017\)](#)

Members of the UKRI Board are required to comply with the 2019 Cabinet Office [Code of Conduct](#) for Board Members of Public Bodies, and it is best practice for UKRI Council members to do the same. Key elements of the Code are therefore embedded within Council member Terms of Appointment letters.

Plans, Monitoring and Accountability

This section covers the maintenance of UKRI's long-term vision and goals as well as the plans and approaches to achieve these.

The [UKRI Delivery Plans](#) highlight the areas of focus and key activities of UKRI's nine constituent councils and cross-cutting themes. The plans have been developed with input from across UKRI's research and innovation communities and build upon the UKRI Strategic Prospectus.

- [UKRI Delivery Plan](#)
- [AHRC](#)
- [BBSRC](#)
- [EPSRC](#)
- [ESRC](#)
- [Innovate UK](#)
- [MRC](#)
- [NERC](#)
- [Research England](#)
- [STFC](#)

The [Annual Report and Accounts](#) provides a summary of UKRI, its structure, purpose, key activities during the past year and the key risks to the achievement of its objectives. The report sets out the governance arrangements of UKRI and provides consolidated annual financial statements.

Council Roles & Responsibilities

This section outlines Council roles and responsibilities.

- Council Terms of Reference

Clarification was provided by the UKRI Chair, CEO and Council Executive Chairs to further clarify the role of Councils in UKRI:

Councils are not solely advisory, they have a clear decision-making role:

- The HER Act is clear that individual Councils are responsible for making decisions, as delegated by UKRI, on scientific, research and innovation matters within their disciplines under a principle of "subsidiarity".

- UKRI uses its Councils as custodians, champions and the best source of expert knowledge within each of the Councils' domains.
- Councils support and challenge Executive Chairs to ensure effective delivery of their responsibilities, specifically in matters relating to each Council's research domain, and in relation to institutes and facilities managed by each Council. This entails holding Executive chairs to account, including for performance; quality of portfolio; delivery against the Council's Strategic Delivery Plan; and reporting of outputs outcomes and impacts.

Policies

This section provides links to UKRI policies and T&Cs of particular relevance to Council Members:

The most relevant aspects of these policies have been highlighted within Council Member Terms of Appointment. These include following the Seven Principles of Public Life, ensuring any gifts and hospitality exceptions can stand up to public scrutiny, and completing and maintaining a conflict of interest declaration.

- [Conflicts of Interest](#)
- [Gifts and Hospitality](#)
- [Modern Slavery](#)
- [Whistleblowing](#)
- [Health and Safety](#)
- [Travel, Subsistence and Expenses](#)
- [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#)
- [The UKRI HR Policy Framework](#)
- [UKRI Code of Conduct](#)

Although policies have been developed for UKRI staff, they also apply to part time office holders, such as Council Members. **Not all sections will be relevant to Council Members.**

Please contact the Council's secretariat contact directly with any queries.

Council Members - Terms of Appointment

Terms of Appointment form part of each Council Member's offer letter and lay out terms and conditions of employment.

Council Meeting Practicalities

Council meetings are organised and coordinated by dedicated secretariat teams. They are a first point of call for any meeting related queries.

Council Membership and the Executive

Information on Council Members is available through the following links:

- [AHRC](#)
- [BBSRC](#)
- [EPSRC](#)
- [ESRC](#)
- [Innovate UK](#)
- [MRC](#)
- [NERC](#)
- [Research England](#)
- [STFC](#)

Links to information on each Council's senior leadership team are below:

- [AHRC](#)
- [BBSRC](#)
- [EPSRC](#)
- [ESRC](#)
- [Innovate UK](#)
- [MRC](#)
- [NERC](#)
- [Research England](#)
- [STFC](#)